

By STUART EARP Rivet Sports 2, Wycombe Wanderers 6 (at Aylesbury)

BRAVE little Rivet Sports gave Wycombe Wanderers a run for their money before they finally succumbed in arctic conditions on Saturday in the third round of the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup at Aylesbury.

Although there was never really any doubt about the final outcome, 'Rivets' held their own for much of the time and it was only in the second half that they were well and truly beaten.

Conditions at Aylesbury were difficult to say the least. A blizzard at the start of the game covered the pitch in an inch of snow and the driving sleet hardly stopped throughout the game. Passing, turning and control were never easy and this led to many mistakes. The snow, in fact, did Rivets a favour, for on a firm pitch the Aylesbury works team would have been massacred by Wycombe's side that was almost at full strength.

But you have still got to hand it to Rivets. Although outclassed they tried to play constructive football and one or two of their moves embarrassed the Wycombe defence. In coloured midfield youngster Floyd Streete they have a fine player in the making while Jamie Murray also showed promise. Centre-half Bob Braber and 'keeper Dave Turner also turned in good performances.

In the end, however, superior team-work and fitness proved the deciding factor. Dave Alexander had a fine first half for Wanderers while Tony Horseman added a brace of goals to his tally and looked the most skilful player on the field.

The goals started as early as the fifth minute, when Wycombe took the lead. John Delaney almost lost possession but slipped the ball through to Howard Kennedy. He found Alexander on the flank and then ran to collect the return pass and flick the ball home at the near post.

Rivets were unimpressed. Steve Hayward began an immediate reply by running wide and crossing for Murray to shoot against the upright and then two minutes later Hayward himself drilled home to equalise. A fine goal this, Dickie Peel sending Murray racing clear and crossing for Hayward to beat the coverless Peter Spittle in goal.

With players slipping and sliding everywhere in a bid to keep their feet, the play was often scrappy but the Blues went ahead again in the 19th minute with a simple but well executed move. Dylan Evans found Mick Holifield on the left and the latter's long cross was headed home by Alexander, who rose beautifully to meet the ball.

Ten minutes later it was 3-1. Turner, whose static goalkicking was poor, sent a goal kick straight to Alexander who pushed the ball through to Horseman. 'Bodger' slipped a pass across the box and the Rivets' defence in complete disarray, Evans swept a shot direct into the net.

Just before half-time, Turner launched himself brilliantly to tip away a magnificent volley from Terry Reardon — by far the most spectacular save of the day.

Rivets must have been reasonably happy with the 3-1 half-time scoreline and their interval team talk set them up for a concerted assault on the Wycombe net. Spittle pulled off a flying save from Mick Caro after Streete had set up the chance with a glorious through ball and then Caro pulled the score back to 3-2 when he chested home a low cross from the left flank.

For a time, Wanderers realised they had a game on their hands and after Geoff Anthony had replaced Alexander, they hit two goals in as many minutes to make sure of a place in the semi-final.

The fourth goal came in the 66th minute and was a killing blow to Rivets, who must have felt their luck was right out. Horseman tried a shot which struck Archibald's boot, lofted over the goalkeeper's head and nestled happily in the back of the net. A minute later Holifield's cross-shot was deftly nodded home by Horseman with the

merest flick of the head.

That signalled the end of the Rivets challenge and for the rest of the game they spent almost the entire time defending. Giving the ball away repeatedly with hasty clearances, Rivets had to withstand a terrific barrage but Wycombe did not help their cause by bunching in the middle. Instead of stretching the Rivets defence, they tried to plough through the middle and sheer weight of numbers often brought their downfall.

Four corners in the last few minutes (Wycombe had 12, Rivets none) kept the works team packed inside the penalty area during which time Turner saved well from Kennedy and Anthony, the latter watching his

point-blank header brilliantly taken by the goalkeeper.

But the pressure just had to pay in the end and with barely a minute left Anthony snatched the sixth goal. Evans rammed in a left foot shot that Turner failed to hold and Anthony snapped up the half chance to bundle the ball home.

RIVETS: D. Turner; G. Jackson, K. Archibald, R. Braber, W. Harrison; R. Peel, F. Streete; P. Gregory; M. Caro. S. Hayward, J. Murray. Subs. R. Robertson, A. Hobbs (not used).

WYCOMBE: P. Spittle; D. Bullock, K. Mead, J. Delaney, R. Eaton; H. Kennedy, T. Reardon, M. Holifield; D. Alexander (sub. G. Anthony, 63 mins.), A. Horseman, D. Evans.

Half-time: 1-3. **Goalscorers:** Wycombe — Horseman 2 (61, 63), Kennedy (5), Alexander (19), Evans (29), Anthony (89). Rivets — Hayward (8), Caro (60).